

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

## President's Message

John Kanzia, Environmental Quality Manager, Brookfield Zoo



Happy New Year, friends! I hope that this finds you safe and well, and that you were able to spend some time with friends and family this holiday season, whether it was in person, with masks and social distancing, or virtual. Gathering and celebrating wisely and safely now will

help ensure that we are able to celebrate many more holidays to come. Our hearts go out to those that have lost friends or family to COVID-19 or complications due to COVID-19; if you did not lose someone dear to you, you surely know someone who did. Hopefully 2021 will bring with it many positive changes, including an end to this pandemic and a return to whatever our "new normal" will be.

We had a decent turnout for our November Community Tree Trim event and December Holiday Magic light festival. While our buildings remained closed per CDC and Illinois guidelines, the park looked great, and provided guests with an opportunity for some enjoyment and holiday cheer. Major kudos to our Grounds and Plant & Facilities staff for hanging up over a million

Christmas lights and decking out our visiting dinos in festive hats and scarves. Our Creative Services team also came up with a fun "Game of Gnomes" event that ran during Holiday Magic. They hid twenty four garden gnomes around the park for guests to find and post selfies with on social media. The gnomes were equipped with solar deck lights so they could still be found at night.

Like many of your facilities, we have spent a lot of time on Facebook Live and other social media venues to stay connected to our guests to let them know that we are still here, relevant, doing great things, taking great care of our animal ambassadors, and desperately in need of their support. I particularly enjoyed watching the adventures of Wellington, a 33-year old rockhopper penguin from the John G. Shedd Aquarium, as he explored the aquarium and took field trips to other facilities, including Soldier Field and the Field Museum of Natural History. Wellington went on to be chosen as 2020's Chicagoan of the Year!

I cannot stress enough how thankful I am to everyone who participated in our COVID chats last year leading up to the virtual conference. A wealth of information and ideas were shared, allowing us to return to work

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safely, and eventually open our doors back up to our guests. It is that spirit of teamwork and networking that brought our founders together in the early 1990's, drew me into the AZFA in Boston back in 2006, and keeps me coming back and looking for more ways to get involved. Your AZFA Board is working hard to start those chats back up in February. If you have a topic that you would like to see or present during one of the chats, please contact Sam Peterson ([sam.peterson@sazoo.org](mailto:sam.peterson@sazoo.org)).

Please also consider signing up for one or more of your committees; it is great way to make lifelong connections within the organization, learn more about and foster the mission and vision of the AZFA, and do some great work with some great people. The various committees and their functions were outlined in the Fall Outlet. Feel free to contact Sam Peterson ([sam.peterson@sazoo.org](mailto:sam.peterson@sazoo.org)) if you have any questions or are interested in getting involved.

We Network, We Build, We Protect

## GET INVOLVED FOR 2021!

# Get Involved for 2021!

By Sam Peterson, Sustainability Coordinator & Office Manager, San Antonio Zoo & Aquarium

We may not be able to get together just yet, but there are plenty of ways to stay connected while we continue maintaining our distance in 2021. Reach out to sign up for one or more committees: Conference, Publications, Membership, Conservation, Professional Relations, and Honors & Awards.

As we confirmed in October, the 2021 conference will be virtual again. This year's theme will be Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, emphasizing our industry's role in environmental justice and biodiversity, in addition to topics like LSS, safety, exhibit design, and sustainability. We are currently seeking presenters and exhibitors interested in conducting a session or vendor spotlight.

In the buildup to the virtual conference, monthly membership Zoom chats will resume this February. The timeslot will be Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. Central Standard Time, and sessions will again be recorded for those unable to attend. If you are interested in hosting a session or have a request for a particular topic, please let us know.

Contact AZFA Administrator [sam.peterson@sazoo.org](mailto:sam.peterson@sazoo.org) for all of the above or any questions about participation in the organization. We love to hear from you!



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**920-231-2000** [www.corrим.com](http://www.corrим.com)

# New Members

## Professional

Riley Macgregor, Aquatics Keeper, Fort Wayne Children's Zoo,

Trenida Norment, Project and Sustainability Manager, John Ball Zoo

## Commercial

Greg Dykstra, Principal, CLR Design

Dave Haas, Project Executive, Pepper Construction Company

## Associate

Scott Taylor, Maintenance Supervisor, Zoo Knoxville

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Due to their generosity,

**Professional Individual AZFA memberships will be FREE for 2021!**

We recognize the following sponsors who paid it forward  
by supporting the annual conference:



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# Calendar

Deadline for the next newsletter April 19th

- **Summer Issue - July**
- **Fall Issue - October**
- **Winter Issue - January**
- **Spring Issue - April**

## **[www.azfa.org](http://www.azfa.org)**

Don't forget to check out the AZFA website for updates and news.

### **Website Administrator**

John Kanzia, [john.kanzia@czs.org](mailto:john.kanzia@czs.org)

### **Membership**

Membership Administrator

Samanthe Peterson, [sam.peterson@sazoo.org](mailto:sam.peterson@sazoo.org)

### **The Outlet**

Articles for the spring issue of The Outlet can be sent to Jennifer Golden, [jgolden@zoonewengland.org](mailto:jgolden@zoonewengland.org)